



## Benefits and Entitlements Service Team (BEST)

### ***What's New***

**27 Jun 05**

**Flexible Spending Account (FSA) Program Enhancements.** The Office of Personnel Management (OPM) has extended the following enhancements to the FSA program.

-- Grace period implemented. Effective immediately, you now have until 15 Mar 06 to incur eligible expenses for the current Plan Year (2005). This doesn't eliminate the use-it-or-lose-it rule, but does increase the chance to avoid forfeiting unused funds. If you have a balance in your Health and/or Dependent Care FSA account as of 31 Dec 05, those funds are available to pay expenses incurred from 1 Jan through 15 Mar 06.

-- Deadline extended for submitting eligible expenses. The deadline for submitting claims for eligible expenses has been pushed back to accommodate the grace period. You now have until 31 May 06 to submit claims for eligible expenses incurred during 2005, and from 1 Jan through 15 Mar 06.

-- The Health Care FSA maximum contribution for Plan Year 2006 is increasing from \$4,000 to \$5,000.

**24 Jun 05**

- **BEST Newsletter for Jun 05 Released.** It can be viewed on the BEST [Newsletters and Bulletins](#) web page.
- **FEHB Coverage and Agency-Paid Premiums Extended to 24 Months for Reservists Called to Active Duty in Support of a Contingency Operation.** For additional information, click [here](#).
- **Last Thrift Savings Plan (TSP) Open Season Ends 30 Jun 05.** Elections submitted 26 – 30 Jun 05 will become effective 10 Jul 05, and will be reflected on the Leave and Earnings Statement received 22 Jul 05.

**2 June 2005**

**Thrift Savings Plan Rates of Return for May 2005.** The following chart represents the change in respective share prices for all the funds for May 05. The changes in share prices reflect net earnings after accrued TSP administrative expenses, trading costs and accrued investment managements fees have been deducted. Percentages in ( ) are negative returns. The G, F, C, S, and I Fund returns for the last 12 months assume unchanging balances (time-weighting) from month to month, and assume that earnings are compounded on a monthly basis. For more information, including share costs, go to the TSP Homepage at [www.tsp.gov](http://www.tsp.gov) and click on "Returns, Share Prices, & Fund Sheets."

	G Fund	F Fund	C Fund	S Fund	I Fund
May 2005	0.37%	1.05%	3.15%	6.05%	(0.40%)
<u>Last 12 Months</u> (6/1/2004 - 5/31/2005)	4.51%	6.84%	8.21%	13.05%	14.20%

## 1 June 2005

**Thrift Savings Plan Telephone Changes Effective 31 May 05.** Callers from **inside** the United States and Canada should use the following number to reach the ThriftLine or the TSP Service Office: (877) 968-3778. This is a toll-free number. Callers from **outside** the United States and Canada who cannot use the toll-free number should use the following telephone number to contact the ThriftLine or the TSP Service Office: (404) 233-4400. This is **not** a toll-free number. The new toll-free TDD number for hearing impaired callers in the United States and Canada is 1-877-847-4385. Callers outside the United States and Canada will continue to call 1-504-255-5113 (not toll-free).